

Positive Parenting for Youth Soccer

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behavior in the game.

In various national surveys, behavior was the biggest concern in the game. This included both the abuse of match officials and the unacceptable behavior by over-competitive parents, spectators and coaches on the sidelines.

The goals of Roadrunners Soccer program are to:

1. Provide all children a positive sports experience free from all forms of inappropriate behavior.
2. Promote exercise and sports participation for the development of healthy lifestyles that will promote wellness through the lifespan.
3. Provide a safe environment for learning positive life skills and the enjoyment of spare time in a sports experience.
4. Teach children the rules, tactics and skills of soccer while promoting sportsmanship, teamwork and the love of the game.

Accomplishing these goals will result in players having more fun, developing sound character, building self esteem, increasing confidence, creating lasting friendships, and improving trust. Every parent, coach and player is asked to abide by a Code of Conduct during all activities, from State-sanctioned tournaments to regularly scheduled League matches through team practices and activities.

Soccer Parents Code of Conduct

- Make soccer participation for your child and others a positive experience.
- Remember that a child is easily affected by outside influences.
- Be kind to your child's coach and to the officials.
- Applaud good plays by your team AND by members of the opposing team.
- Parents should be cheerleaders. Allow the coach to coach, the referee to officiate, and most of all allow your child to play the game.
- Between the exuberance of the winner and the disappointment of the loser, we have the referee. All of them follow the same creed to watch every movement of every player, and to call the game to the best of their ability. DO NOT openly question their judgment, and never their honesty. They are a symbol of fair play, integrity and sportsmanship.
- Accept the results of each game, and encourage your child to: Be gracious in victory, and turn defeat to victory by working towards improvement

Useful links for parents:

Positive Parenting for Youth Soccer Video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFuVVYJYMEA>

US Youth Soccer Show.

<http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/multimedia/>

Pocket guide to rules and common terms:

http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/parents/Soccer_Pocket_Guide_Intro/

Below are facts provided by a study by the Youth Sports Institute, on what players want from their sports experience.

***TRUTHS* about children and sports**

Fun is pivotal - if it's not *fun*, young people won't play a sport

Skill development is a crucial aspect of fun - it is more important than winning even among the best athletes

The most rewarding challenges of sports are those that lead to self-knowledge

Intrinsic rewards (self-knowledge that grows out of self-competition) are more important in creating lifetime athletes than extrinsic rewards are (victory or attention from others)

During childhood allow the kids to have a good time playing the game while instilling the passion to love playing soccer on their own. Only a passion for the game can lead to success.

"Success is something players take ownership of and in time it becomes personally meaningful. Success is a process, not a product. The process of doing one's best is the key to success. The determining criterion of success is whether a player gave his or her best that day. Doing one's best is the most important statement a player can make about the importance of an activity and the meaning it has. With years of experience comes self-knowledge and self-awareness. So players learn over time what it means to do your best, to give 100%."

"Winning isn't everything, but trying to is!" – Rainer Martens, sports psychologist

Motives for Participation in Youth Sport

Reasons for Participating in Non-school Sports (study of 3,900 7th to 12th graders)

Boys

1. To have fun
2. To do something I'm good at
3. To improve my skills
4. For the excitement of competition
5. To stay in shape
6. For the challenge of competition
7. To get exercise
8. To learn new skills
9. To play as part of a team
10. To go to a higher level of competition

Girls

1. To have fun
2. To stay in shape
3. To get exercise
4. To improve my skills
5. To do something I am good at
6. To learn new skills
7. For the excitement of competition
8. To play as part of a team
9. To make new friends
10. For the challenge of competition

Truths & Motives for Participation

1. Have fun and to enjoy participating in sport.
2. Learn new skills and to improve on existing sports skills.
3. Become physically fit and to enjoy good health
4. Enjoy the challenge and excitement of sports participation and competition.
5. Enjoy a team atmosphere and to be with friends.

Suggestions for Parents

- Remember the *truths* and talk to your children with them in mind. After a game, ask questions about *fun*, *skill improvement*, *learning experiences* and *having a good time with friends*.
- See yourself as part of the team and supportive of the coach; avoid setting up a conflict in your child's mind between his or her parents and coaches. If you want to affect the coaching, volunteer to help.
- Develop perspective: remember what you could do at your children's ages; don't judge them by what you can do now. Kids will not become great players overnight.
- Develop an understanding of what your children want from sports—not all children want the same things. Determine if they want to be involved at all.

In general the benefits of youth sports for children include character building, humility in winning, leadership growth opportunities, cooperative skills, social skills and dealing with obstacles, losing and competition. We employ soccer to develop well adjusted, good citizens.